TO THE

CHIEF JAILOR of the TOLBOOTH of EDINBURGH.

YOU will doubtleſs be highly flattered by the Addreſs of this Letter. On Wedneſday laſt you ſeized the fatal *Keys* with a joy ſuperior to your acceptance of the *Golden Chain*. Since that time, the Title to this Honourable Office has been vindicated by ſuch proofs of capacity, that the neglect of applauſe would reflect ingratitude upon your Conſtituents.

The Legiſlature of Scotland, as a compliment to the Metropolis of their Country, ordered that no Arreaſts for Civil Debt ſhould take place within the bounds of Edinburgh, untill the conſent of its Magiſtrates ſhould be previouſly obtained. Such however is your Lordſhip's regard to the property of the ſubjects in general, that at your command the Ancient Privileges of the City fell proſtrate at the feet of Executive Power.

The *Aſſembled Council* of *Edinburgh* for the firſt time ſaw themſelves rudely attacked by a Poſſe of Catchpoles. The Gentlemen preſent would have treated them as their impudence deſerved: But your Lordſhip taught your Brethren a juſt regard for theſe Reſpectable Viſitants. You proved, that the Public Buſineſs ought to give way to the ſuperior authority of Bailiffs; and nobly moved, that, even againſt the concurrence of the City, the Doors ſhould fly open to make way for dragging a TRADES DEACON from the very *Council Table* to *Jail*.

Common obſervation would not perhaps have noted, that this Act of Juſtice is at the ſame time a part of your *New Patriotic Plan*. Perſons unacquainted with Political Manœuvres, wonder-

ed for ſome time, that the Leets obtained from the Coporations upon the Reformed Principle, were lighter in point of mettal, and in no reſpect preferable to any ever procured by the Old and Hoſtile Party. Let theſe people now learn, that a Reforming Leader muſt not ſtrike ordinary weapons. To be coldly negative will do nothing. *Tradeſmen of property and credit were only to be admitted under the new banners.* But how could a juſt indignation be ſo forcibly marked againſt a *Poor Brother*, as to call him firſt to the *Council Table*, and then puniſh his preſumption upon the ſpot?

Felons and Deſperadoes are never wanting within the walls of the Edinburgh Jail. The common Watch and Ordinary Keeper is for them ſufficient: Though ſuch men did eſcape, they could do no more than break the houſes, or cut the throats of the Citizens. But an unfortunate *Deacon* was a more Dangerous Priſoner. The Honourable the Lord PROVOST, ſhrunk into the Executive Jailor, ſuperded the perſon in office, and aſſerted his Title to it by Council, in preſence of the Judges; an inſtance of humility which none of his predeceſſors ever had to boaſt of!

Veſted with the Character, you have outſhone all the Jailors of Britain in the virtues of their profeſſion. They have always imagined their Duty went no farther than to detain their Priſoner till ſet at large by Law. But your Lordſhip has diſcovered a capital improvement. You made it your Duty to defeat the interpoſitions of the Law, and to keep the Priſoner faſt in defiance of Liberation. You cannot indeed be ſaid to have oppoſſed the Mace of the City to that of our Supreme Court; but you oppoſed to their Baubles, the Enſigns of Real Power, the Tremendous Keys of the Tolbooth.

There are people who endeavour to deprive your Lordſhip of all this merit: They ſay, and your Lordſhip in your great

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modeſty authoriſed them to ſay, That you had no previous knowledge of the intentions of the Creditor, or any plan to take advantage of the misfortunes of the Individual, till the Arreſt appeared at the Council-bar. If ſo, the compliment is heightened beyond the reach of expreſſion. Ordinary men are ſufficiently difficulted in executing plans of their own contrivance: But it ſeems your Lordſhip's Execution ſtands independent either of concert or of knowledge.

For my own part I am determined to give faith to your Lordſhip's word, as I have hitherto religiouſly done, againſt all appearances: But ſome Miſbelievers pretend, that, ſo far from giving credit to your Lordſhip, they would not believe even ST PETER himſelf, tho' furniſhed, like you, with *double keys*. They ſay, that the Act of Incarceration bears the Man to have been committed, not only at the inſtance of the Creditor, but by the *ſpecial deſire of another Gentleman, the avowed Agent for your Lordſhip*. They obſerve, that the Gentleman made his appearance upon your part, before the aſſembling of the Council, or the intruſion of the Catchpoles; that the *ſame Council* engaged to ſupport the intended revolution, appeared to ſecond the impriſonment, and aſſert your title to the office of Jailor; and they add, that the unfortunate Deacon's Petition for Relief was oppoſed by the very ſame Gentleman, tho' in vain. X

If Miſbelievers are capable of conviction, let them now attend. I repeat, that your Lordſhip's conduct in the ſeizure of the DEACON of MARY's Chapel might be in ſome degree influenced by Politics; but it was much more directed by your unconquerable regard to juſtice.

Impriſonment is meant by Law to force a Man to pay his debt. Dungeons and ſtench are the implements by which this force operates, and therefore neceſſary parts of juſtice. The Genius of the *Chief Jailor* here furniſhed our ſecond improvement.

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You calmly reflected, that a Priſoner may lye ſoft, though he breathes bad air. And to correct ſuch an omiſſion in the Law, your Lordſhip iſſued your orders for ſhortening, by two hours, the time for admitting of a bed into the jail; and ſo opportunely was the notice of this innovation given to the confined Deacon, that the appointed hour elapſed, before a meſſage could reach his family to that purpoſe.

Now, will any perſon pretend that this *coup de eclat* had connection with Politics? Surely not. Confinement itſelf compleatly anſwers thoſe purpoſes, though ſoftened by every poſſible circumſtance of comfort. Juſtice, therefore, juſtice to mankind alone, prompted your Lordſhip to ſecond her favourite *ſqualor carceris*, by a new and *intolerable ſtimulus*.

According to common report, a conſiderable practice has not been able to expell the milk of human kindneſs from the breaſt of SIMON FRAZER, the ordinary Jailor; but the tender office inſtantaneouſly mixed with congenial matter in the boſom of your Lordſhip. Like a Poet, *a perfect jailor* muſt be born *ſuch*.

An office yet remains nearly allied to the preſent, and ſtill more deſireable, to which your Lordſhip has the very ſame title, *viz. Chief Executioner*. No DEACON, or unfortunate Tradeſman, is like to be hanged in your reign, which I dare ſay your Lordſhip will much regret, as you certainly would not truſt the Nooſe to any fingers but your own.

Your old Aſſociates in Council pretend to have weathered many a ſtorm in Politics, without degrading (as they term it) the Chief Magiſtrate or themſelves, with any employment unbecoming their character. They diſdained to uſe any other means than what was put into their hands, by the conſtitution of the city; at ſame time boldly giving out, That your Lordſhip is the very firſt PROVOST of EDINBURGH who has ſtooped

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ed to act a perſonal part in violence and law reſentment. And they add, that the Public, from this firſt appearance in politics, may underſtand the meaning of your Favourite Phraſe "*Broadning the bottom of the city government.*"

To ſtop their mouths, will your Lordſhip deign to condeſcend upon ſome precedents for your conduct among the long line of your Predeceſſors? But if you are the firſt *eſprit fort* that dared to prefer the *Cart* to the *Coach*, and the *Keys* to the *Mace*—boldly avow it; and let your friends triumph in a Heaven-born Genius.

The Veteran Party are indeed a ſet of Narrow-minded Fellows.—That hateſull Hammerman SIMPSON has, ſome how or other, conſtantly worked his way by the dull, obtuſe qualities of probity and moderation.—The Man, it is ſaid, exiſts not, who can accuſe *him* of *gilding downright treachery with loud profeſſions of perſonal friendſhip*.—Lord help him! he knows little of the ſimulation and diſſimulation of Lord CHESTERFIELD: Party itſelf does not ſay he promiſes without intention to perform: Nay, the puſillanimous Set pretend to deſpiſe the little means of political reſentment, and have often ſerved the worthy Individuals of an Hoſtile Faction.

It ill becomes ſuch *lilly-livered fools* to manage the affairs of a polite Metropolis: The lightning of Reformation was therefore properly directed againſt this *Tradeſman Chief*. *Graſs him* was the word, and *graſſed* he would have been, with all the ignominy due to ſuch a character, had your Lordſhip's friends allowed the bandages of Patriotiſm to remain upon their eyes.

No matter, 'tis not in mortals to command ſucceſs: But, my good LORD, I have endeavoured to ſhew that you have richly deſerved it. Accept then my weak Io TRIUMPHE

amidſt the louder applauſes of the mob. As HAMPDEN PRIDIE, and his ſuper-excellent brethren, did honour to the Patriotiſm and Popularity of the year 1774; the ſame virtues of the 1776 are ennobled by a LORD CHIEF JAILOR.

I am, My LORD,

Your Lordſhip's,

Moſt devoted follower and ſervant.

A STEADY PATRIOT.

P. S. Pleaſe, have me excuſed for omitting the proper compliment to your *gratitude and friendſhip*, with modern Patriots. You know one inſtance of public ſpirit annihilates every vice, and out-weighs the catalogue of private virtues.

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